

## Mary's Appeal to Conscience.

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nation, as represented by the Estates, was rather a pettish device.

On the other hand, Knox, in insisting on submission to the will of God rather than to the will of the people, appears as the theocrat, not the democrat, and the theocracy of a Knox is certainly not an advance on the autocracy of a Mary. The supremacy of the Kirk in the State is in truth rank popery, and the reformer was not enlightened enough to perceive that he was substituting a Protestant for a popish tyranny, or to seek a wider basis for government in the will and rights of the governed. Moreover, the will of God is rather a subjective argument in political debate, and Mary, eschewing prerogative, skilfully appealed to conscience in justification of her refusal to accept Protestantism, or subscribe to Knox's interpretation of Scripture. And here, it seems to me that she had decidedly the better of her antagonist. In championing the rights of conscience, she meant, however, only her own royal conscience, not that of the individual or the nation, if it happened to disagree with hers. For her no dissent from or resistance to the will of the prince, even in religion, is permissible. As against Knox's theocratical dogmatism, however, her reply was pertinent and forcible. " Yea (quod sche), but ye are not the Kirk that I will nureiss. I will defend the Kirk of Rome, for, I think, it is the treu Kirk of God." " Your will, Madam, is no reassone; neather doeth your thoght mack that Romane harlot to be the treu and imma-culat spous of Jesus Christ." " My conscience (said sche) is nott so." " Conscience, Madam (said he), requyres knowlege, and I fear that rycht knowlege ye have none." " But (said sche) I have bayth heard and red." " So (said he), Madam, did the Jewes that crucifyed Christ Jesus read both the Law and the Prophetis, and heard the same interprate after thair maner." " Ye interprete the Scripturis (said sche) in one maner, and thei interprete in aneother. Whome shall I beleve? And who shal be judge?" This was indeed a poser, in view of the conflicting jangle of theological exegesis from the days of the apostles to those of Knox himself, and particularly in this Reformation age. Knox refers her to the Bible, which he thinks explains itself, and offers to let the Bible decide between them; but it is certain that in any